



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 17, 2006

## **Wilton Residents Sentenced for Drug Conspiracy Convictions**

**BISMARCK** - United States Attorney Drew H. Wrigley announced that

**Francis K. Zacher**, a/k/a **Frank Zacher**, 46, and **Madina Helm**, 44, both of Wilton, North Dakota, were sentenced on February 17, 2006, before Senior Judge Patrick A. Conmy. **Zacher** and **Helm** were found guilty by a Federal jury on November 23, 2005, of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribute controlled substance and possession of firearms and ammunition by an unlawful user of a controlled substance. **Zacher** was also found guilty of possession of an unregistered firearm.

Senior Judge Conmy sentenced **Zacher** to ten years and one month in Federal prison, four years of supervised release, and a \$300 special assessment to the Crime Victim's Fund.

Senior Judge Conmy sentenced **Helm** to ten years in Federal prison, four years of supervised release, and a \$200 special assessment to the Crime Victim's Fund.

A co-defendant, **Jesse Garcia**, 61, Hereford, Texas, pleaded guilty on September 19, 2005, to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribute a controlled substance. **Garcia** was sentenced on December 20, 2005, by Senior Judge Conmy and received six years and eight months in a Federal prison, five years of supervised release, and a \$100 special assessment to the Crime Victims fund.

In November 2004 officials from Federal Express in Bismarck reported to the Bismarck Police Department that suspicious packages were being sent between **Zacher** and **Garcia**. On November 16, 2004, **Helm** delivered a package to Federal Express in Bismarck. Bismarck police obtained a search

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warrant for that package and discovered \$5,200 in cash in the package. On November 29, 2004, another package arrived at the Federal Express facility addressed to **Zacher** from **Garcia**. A search warrant was obtained and officers found 132 grams of a substance containing methamphetamine in the package. On November 30, 2004, **Helm** transported another package to Federal Express; again, a search warrant was obtained, and \$6,200 in cash was found.

On December 1, 2004, the Texas Department of Public Safety obtained a search warrant for **Garcia's** residence in Hereford, Texas, and officers found approximately 407 grams of a mixture containing methamphetamine within the residence.

On December 1, 2004, a search warrant was obtained for the **Zacher** residence in rural Wilton and **Helm** consented to a search of her residence in Wilton. Law enforcement officers discovered several firearms and ammunition at the **Zacher** residence. **Zacher** also had a weapon made from a shotgun which was not registered to him in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. A firearm and ammunition were found in a search of **Helm's** vehicle.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration; Bismarck Police Department; Metro Area Narcotics Task Force; North Dakota Parole and Probation; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and Texas Department of Public Safety.

Special Assistant United States Attorney Paul Emerson prosecuted the case.

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